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PRESS RELEASE

DATE/TIME OF RELEASE: 01/03/04 12:00 PM
DATE/TIME OF OCCURRENCE: 01/03/04 1:30 AM
NATURE OF CALL: SEARCH AND RESCUE
LOCATION OF CALL: ALPINE MEADOWS SKI RESORT,
LAKE TAHOE, CALIFORNIA
CASE NUMBER: SO-04-135

SHERIFF EDWARD N. BONNER RELEASES THE FOLLOWING :

The Placer County Sheriff's Department received a missing persons report on Saturday, January 3, 2004 at about 1:34 a.m. Four Reno, Nevada residents, Nicholas Novich, 20 years old, Kip Shields, 25, Jesse McKillop, 24 and Porter McQueary, 26, were reported to be overdue from a snowboarding trip to the Alpine Meadows ski resort located at Lake Tahoe, California. Investigating deputies located their snow-covered vehicle still in the parking lot and a search and rescue operation was initiated.

Searchers included the Tahoe Nordic team and Placer County Sheriff Communications volunteers who had just successfully concluded another all night rescue operation at Sugar Bowl Ski resort near Donner Summit. Air support for the search was requested from the California Highway Patrol at the first daylight. Flight crewmembers of CHP Helicopter 20, based out of Sacramento, California located the subjects at 7:45 am in the Five Lakes drainage area about 2 ½ miles west of the Alpine Meadows ski resort in the USFS wilderness area.

The lost snowboarders told rescuers they had skied off the backside of the Summit Chairlift at about 2:30 pm and within a half hour realized that they were lost. Together they skied and walked through white out blizzard conditions. It was determined that they followed the downhill drainages of Whiskey Creek westbound into a valley where they thought they would run into civilization. At about 1:00 am they located an unlocked hunting cabin and were able to start a small fire using small scraps of paper and whatever else they could find to keep warm in the shelter. "If they had not located the hunting cabin they

probably would not have survived the sub-zero night temperatures," according to the search coordinating deputy Fred Carey.

The boarders and rescuers were airlifted out in good condition to the resort; the search and rescue operation was concluded by 9:00 am.

RELEASED BY: Lt. Jeffrey A. Granum, North Tahoe Station
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SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT WEBSITE @ placer.ca.gov/sheriff.